VALUES

"All that is truly valuable in human society both honors God and develops man."

I counted dollars, while God counted crosses.
I counted gains, while He counted losses.
I counted my worth, my things gained in store,
And He sized me up by the scars that I bore.
I counted honors and sought degrees,
He counted the hours that I spent on my knees.
I never knew until one day by the grave,
How vain are the things we spend life to save.

What are your values -- what is important to you?

Values, most simply stated, are the things in life that are most important to you. They are the guideposts and convictions that shape your decisions, actions and everyday lifestyle.

In Matthew 6:19-21 Jesus addresses the heart of the issue:

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

<u>Three Biblical Insights About Christian Values</u>

1. There is a strong contrast between the temporary nature of the world and the eternal nature of God's Kingdom.

2. Where you invest is where your rewards will be.

3. Values are an issue of the heart. They begin there and express themselves in your actions.

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My One Hour With God

1. Preparation Time

"If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory."

Colossians 3:1-4

List the areas that you have not yet settled in your personal value system. In other words, in what areas do you at times question or waver in your beliefs and actions?

1. Family values _____
2. Church values _____
3. Relational values _____
4. Personal values _____
5. Career values _____

2. Waiting Time

During your waiting time, let God...

1. Love you

   "God, I feel your love today, especially in the area of..."

   _____

   _____

2. Search you

   "God, you have permission to reveal any wrong values in my life."

   _____

   _____

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3. **Show you**

"God, is there anything that I need to know as I enter this day?"

_____

_____

3. **Confession time**

"Now therefore fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. And if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:14-15

Confess any areas where worldly values have crept into your life.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. **Bible Time**

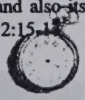
We can never pray out of God's will when we pray God's Word

...Read this passage slowly a couple of times

...Close your eyes and allow a main truth to surface in your heart

...Pray the Scripture and allow God to minister to you

"Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever." I John 2:15-17



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5. Meditation Time

After praying the Scriptures, write down the thoughts that God has impressed upon your mind.

(1)

(2)

(3)

6. Intercession Time - Praying for Others

Begin this time with a prayer of blessing and thanksgiving for the people for whom you will now intercede.

Name	Request

7. Petition Time - Praying for Yourself

How to petition God properly

A. Talk to him about the "little things"

B. Be honest with God

C. Pray "Thy will be done"

Prayer Requests

(1)	(5)
(3)	(6)
(3)	(7)
(4)	(8)

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8. Application Time

The smallest obedient act is better than the greatest intention

Q. What is the main thing that God has impressed upon me today?

_____

_____

Q. What am I going to do about it?

_____

Steps to take in my obedience to God this week

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

9. Faith Time

Faith is our positive response to what God has said. Spend a few moments praying, through your eyes of faith. Tell God the positive things you see happening because of His goodness!

10. Praise and Thanksgiving Time

Praise God by recognizing **WHO HE IS**

Thank God by recognizing **WHAT HE HAS DONE**

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THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Romans 12:2

This week's Time Alone With God

Monday - This lesson

Tuesday - Pray through Matthew 19:16-26

Wednesday - Make a list of the values you have settled in your heart to live by.

Thursday - Write a prayer of commitment to God that you will live by His values, as you understand them in Scripture.

Friday - Review your memory verse

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INTIMACY WITH GOD

Most of our spiritual problems are rooted in a false conception of who God is.

A few years ago, the Boston Globe interviewed Dennis Wise, an avid Elvis Presley fan. His words of both passion and despair are striking:

"I loved Elvis. I followed him, his whole career. I have every album he has recorded, and seen every movie he's made. I once even bought some boots when I was in junior high school that looked just like his. The kids called them 'fruit boots.' But I didn't care--they looked like Elvis.

Later, I even got a face lift, and a hair contour like his. I have won Elvis look-alike contests, and wanted him to notice, so I would storm the stage during and after concerts he would do. I don't think he ever saw me. I have ticket stubs from concerts, Elvis clippings from programs all over the world, and even some Elvis pillows from Japan.

Yeah, Presley was, and is my idol. My only regret was . . . that I never really saw him. . .I mean, <u>really</u> saw him. Sure, I went to concerts, but there was no contact. I once even climbed the walls around Graceland, the Presley mansion, to catch a glimpse of him. I think it might have been him that was walking through the house as I was looking through my binoculars. But . . . I never really saw him. It's funny . . . all the effort I put in to following him--and I never could seem to get close."

In James 4:6-10, we are told how to get into position to see God. So often, our story sounds too much like Dennis Wise. We want to experience intimacy with God, but if we were honest, we'd have to say: "It's funny, all the effort I put into following Him . . . and I never could seem to get close." Our Christian life, even as leaders, becomes a series of predictable routines, and we even take pride in mastering those routines through human effort and sacrifice. But we don't experience intimacy. Our journey is academic and sterile. We fail to see that our first step must be brokenness and heartfelt desire for God to manifest Himself to us, who, by nature, are aliens to His ways. He has made Himself available to us, if we'll take the conscious, deliberate steps to abide in Him and linger in His presence.

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Three Foundations We Must Build Upon:

1. Intimacy with God is not automatic, but is the result of right choices.
2. Intimacy with God begins with our own submission, humility, and brokenness.
3. We naturally oppose God and must now make our move toward Him.

My One Hour With God

1. Preparation Time

Exodus 33:11 - "Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face just as a man speaks to His friend."

Reflect and Respond to these questions . . .

1. What barriers keep me from experiencing intimacy with God?

   _____

2. What will it take for me to become intimate?

   _____

3. Have I bought into any "myths" about God that keep me distant? List them.

   _____

4. Am I really hungry for God, enough to act on what I need to do?

   _____

2. Waiting Time

During your waiting time, let God . . .

1. Love you

   God, I feel your love today, especially in the area of . . .

   _____

   _____

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2. Search you

   God, you have my permission to reveal any barriers in my life.

   _____

   _____

3. Show you - God, is there anything that I need to know that will enhance my intimacy with You?

   _____

   _____

3. Confession Time

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. (Matthew 22:37)

. . . that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height and depth and to know the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge ... (Ephesians 3:17-19)

Confess areas in which you are alienated from the love of God.

1. _____
2. _____

Confess areas in which you do not love God with all of your heart, soul, mind:

1. _____
2. _____

4. Bible Time

. . . Read the passage below slowly, a couple of times.

. . . Close your eyes and allow this Truth to surface in your heart.

. . . Pray the Scripture and personalize it as God's truth to you.

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But now, thus says the Lord, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! When you pass through the water, I will be with you. And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you. For I am the Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place. Since you are precious in My sight, Since you are honored and I love you, I will give other men in your place and other peoples in exchange for your life. Isaiah 43:1-4

5. Meditation Time

After praying the scriptures, write down the thoughts that God has impressed upon your mind . . .

(1)

(2)

(3)

6. Intercession Time - Praying for Others

Pray for three people in your life, who you would especially love to see become intimate with God. Pray for revelation to come to them, and for them to experience what you've thought through today.

Name	Request

7. Petition Time - Praying for Yourself

Pray for God to reveal Himself to you in fresh ways, and pray specifically for the barriers to be removed that stand between you and God.

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How to Petition God Properly

A. Talk to him about the "little things."

B. Be honest with God.

C. Pray "Thy will be done."

Prayer Requests

(1)	(5)
(2)	(6)
(3)	(7)
(4)	(8)

8. Application Time

Q. What is the main thing that God has impressed upon me today? _____

_____

Q: What am I going to do about it?

_____

_____

Steps to take in my obedience to God this week

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

9. Faith Time

Faith is our positive response to what God has said. Spend a few moments praying through your eyes of faith. Tell God the positive things you see happening because of His goodness!

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10. Praise and Thanksgiving Time

Praise God by recognizing **WHO HE IS**

Thank God by recognizing **WHAT HE HAS DONE**

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSES

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment.

(Matthew 22:37)

. . . that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height and depth and to know the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge. . .

(Ephesians 3:17-19)

This week's Time Alone With God

Monday - This lesson.

Tuesday - Each of us is as close to God as we have chosen to be. We have not taken further steps toward intimacy with Him because of barriers that exist between a holy, perfect God and sinful, weak humans. God's ways are not our ways, nor are His thoughts our thoughts (Isaiah 55:9). Getting to know Him is a "cross-cultural" experience for us all! Take a moment, and write below the barriers you are aware of that keep you and God at a distance:

What can be done about these barriers? Are there steps you can take? Are there requests you can pray? Jot them down.

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Wednesday - One of the hurdles we must jump en route to intimacy with God, is the set of "myths" or misconceptions we've come to believe about Him and spirituality. Below is a simple list of the most common myths people unconsciously believe:

The Myths on Intimacy with God

1. The Emotions vs. Truth Myth
   Myth: Intimacy with God is just an issue of the emotions
2. The Knowledge Myth
   Myth: The more Scripture I know, the more intimate I must be
3. The Feelings Myth
   Myth: When I feel close to God, I must be
4. The Good Deeds Myth
   Myth: If I'm a good person, I must be close to God
5. The Positional Myth
   Myth: Intimacy with God is my possession as a Christian
6. The Intensity Myth
   Myth: If I am a deep and intense person or serve God with great fervor, I must be close to Him.

Q: Have you bought into any of these myths? How about any others you can think of?

Q: Why would these myths hinder us from intimacy with God?

Begin to pray for God to replace these myths with truth, in your relationship to Him.

Thursday - Look again at Exodus 33:11
"Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face just as a man speaks to His friend."

Earlier in the text, Moses demonstrates the price he paid for this kind of intimate friendship with God. Look at this pricetag below, and respond on how you are doing at paying what it costs to be intimate:

Moses Teaches The Price Of Intimacy:

I. You must be willing to separate yourself regularly, v.7
   A. Key: Outside the camp

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II. You must be willing to seek after God with all your heart, v.7
   A. Key: Sought the Lord

III. You must be willing to be watched by the public, v.8
   A. Key: Gaze after Moses

IV. You must be willing to learn to listen and obey God's voice, v. 9
   A. Key: Lord would speak

V. You must be willing to enter covenant partnership with God, v. 10-11
   A. Key: Partnership, trustworthiness, commitment

Friday - In John 15:1-15 we read about what it means to abide in Christ. This text defines the experience of intimacy with God. In it we learn that...

1. The practice of intimacy with God is essential (v. 5-6)
2. The product of intimacy with God is fruitfulness (v. 4)
3. The proof of intimacy with God is obedience (v. 10-14)

Unfortunately, most of us run straight to the results. We want to produce. We want fruit in our lives. We fail to see that intimacy with God comes first. The proper order should be:

1. To know God
   (In this first step, we experience God's initial love for us)

. . . that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height and depth and to know the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge...
Ephesians 3:17-19

2. To Love God
   (Ultimately, we obey out of a love relationship with Him.)

Q: Have you experienced this sequence in your life?

Q: How have you short-circuited the process by switching the order?

Q: What can you do now to re-prioritize the love of God?

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THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

"You have laughed God out of your schools, out of your books, and out of your life, but you cannot laugh Him out of your death." ***Dagobert Runes***

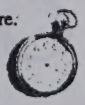
There's an old story about a man who'd been stranded on an uncharted, desert island. He'd been sailing alone, on the Pacific, and a storm hit him that threw him off course, and almost killed him. After a whole day on the island, and no rescue ship in sight, he decided to build a shelter for himself and his only remaining possessions. He became bitter after a couple of days. Why had God allowed this to happen? Was he going to starve to death? All he owned was stored in that small hut he'd built for himself. Maybe this was going to be a lesson in trusting God.

Then, the final tragedy struck. After hunting for food one day, the man returned to his hut, only to find it had caught on fire! It was going up in smoke. The man fell to his knees and cried: "God, how will I learn to trust you when things like this happen? I've lost all that I own!" An hour passed, as the man sulked. Then, to his surprise, a rescue ship arrived for him. Astonished, he asked how they found him? Their response: "We saw your smoke signal."

ROMANS 9:14-26 and 11:16-22 are common texts we look to when we study the sovereignty of God. Both chapters are vivid discourses on God's ultimate rule and reign over the earth. Interestingly, the first illustrates God's role in the issue-the second, our role. Romans 9 teaches that God chooses as He wishes, He controls what He wishes, and His nature is consistent. He is just, and good, and loving. Romans 11 teaches that we must respond by keeping our heart: 1) cooperative, 2) contrite, and 3) committed to His purposes.

So, how do we reconcile the fact that the Scripture teaches both God's sovereignty and man's free will? The following truths and passages may help lay a foundation for us:

1. Our free will means we are free only in one direction: We are slaves to sin (Romans 6:16-20). We are not free until we come to Jesus Christ!
2. We can desire good/righteousness, but are powerless to obtain it. (Romans 7:18)
3. We need outside power to cause us to will/do His good pleasure. (Philippians 2:13)



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4. That power/grace has been shed upon/available to all mankind. (Titus 2:11)
5. The gospel has power to free us. Consequently, when it's presented, we become responsible to walk in its freedom. (Romans 1:16/Luke 12:47)
6. Only then can we willfully cooperate with God's sovereign purposes. (Romans 8:29)
7. We are, in fact, urged/obligated to choose surrender to those purposes. (Romans 6:12-18/Romans 12:1)

MY ONE HOUR WITH GOD

1. Preparation Time

Habakkuk 1:5 "Look among the nations! Observe! Be astonished! Wonder! Because I am doing something in your days. You would not believe if you were told."

Observe the various areas of your own life. How is God moving sovereignly, performing His work in your...

1. Personal Life _____
2. Family Life _____
3. Church Life _____
4. Business Life _____
5. Other _____

2. Waiting Time

During your waiting time, let God . . .

1. Love you

   "God, I feel your love today, especially in the area of . . ."

   _____

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2. Search you
"God, you have permission to reveal any "control issue" in my life, where I cling to control the situation.

_____

_____

3. Show you

"God, is there any area in which I need to trust you more, as I enter this day?"

_____

_____

3. **Confession Time**

Job 42:1-6 - Then Job answered the Lord, and said, "I know that Thou canst do all things, and that no purpose of Thine can be thwarted. 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' "Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know." 'Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask Thee, and do Thou instruct me.' "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees Thee; therefore I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes."

Confess areas that you distrusted God's sovereign hand, and spoke too quickly. Then, repent of your attitude.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. **Bible Time**

We can never pray out of God's will when we pray God's Word.

. . . Read this passage slowly a couple of times.

. . . Close your eyes and allow a main truth to surface in your heart.

. . . Pray the Scripture and allow God to minister to you.

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Habakkuk 3:17-19 - Though the fig tree should not blossom, and there be no fruit on the vines, though the yield of the olive should fail, and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there be no cattle in the stalls, yet I will exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet, and makes me walk on my high places.

5. Meditation Time

After praying the Scriptures, write down the thoughts that God has impressed upon your mind.

(1)

(2)

(3)

6. Intercession Time - Praying for Others

Begin this time with a prayer of blessing and thanksgiving for the people of whom you will now intercede. Then, pray that God would accomplish His purposes in their lives and that they would be open to cooperate with Him.

NAME	REQUEST

7. Petition Time - Praying for Yourself

How to petition God properly

A. Talk to him about the "little things" that bother you, where you cannot see Him working.

B. Be honest with God, and express your desire to trust Him in all things.

C. Pray "Thy will be done."

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Prayer Requests

(1) (5)

(2) (6)

(3) (7)

(4) (8)

8. Application Time

The smallest obedient act is better than the greatest intention

Q. What is the main thing that God has impressed upon me today?

_____

_____

Q. What am I going to do about it?

_____

Steps to take in my obedience to God this week

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

My goal: To implement the above steps in the next seven days.

9. Faith Time

Faith is our positive response to what God has said. Spend a few moments praying, through your eyes of faith. Tell God the positive things you see happening because of His sovereign rule over your life!

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10. Praise and Thanksgiving Time

Praise God by recognizing **WHO HE IS**

Thank God by recognizing **WHAT HE HAS DONE**

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

"What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth." So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?" On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it?

Romans 9:14-20 NAS

<u>This week's Time Alone With God</u>

Monday - This lesson.

Tuesday - Job 40:1-9 - Then the Lord said to Job, "Will the faultfinder contend with the Almighty? Let him who reproves God answer it." Then Job answered the Lord and said, "Behold, I am insignificant; what can I reply to Thee? I lay my hand on my mouth. Once I have spoken, and I will not answer; Even twice, and I will add no more." Then the Lord answered Job out of the storm, and said, "Now gird up your loins like a man; I will ask you, and you instruct Me. "Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified? "Or do you have an arm like God, and can you thunder with a voice like His?"

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As we've already seen, God confronts Job and his friends with their prognosis about suffering, toward the close of the book of Job. God simply reminds them that He is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent and sovereign over all living creatures. No further explanation is needed.

Take some time and journal your concerns and questions to God. After putting them on paper, confess God's wisdom, power, and rule over each of them.

_____

_____

_____

Wednesday - One of the major themes of Habakkuk is God's sovereignty. The prophet questions God about His dealings with His people and ultimately responds well to God's rule and reign. He sees that God isn't idle, as he'd suspected, and that all he needed to be concerned with is his own faithfulness and obedience. In a nutshell, here's what we learn from the prophet:

<u>What Habakkuk teaches us about God's sovereignty:</u>

A. Everything happening is not necessarily God's will and wishes

B. Everything happening has not been overlooked by God

C. Everything happening will ultimately be addressed with justice

D. Everything happening should not distract us from continuing to respond with faithfulness!

<u>Habakkuk teaches us the proper response too.</u>
(Hab. 2:1-3; 3:16-19)

A. Request (Go ahead and ask for God's wisdom and His will to be done.)

B. Relax (Rest in His control and trust His providence.)

C. Receive (Listen and wait for His instruction; be open to change.)

D. Respond (Obey whatever He says.)

E. Rejoice (Worship sustains God's rule.)

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After reading these passages, why not follow Habakkuk's same journey regarding the tough issues you face in your life? Write down your response!

_____

_____

_____

Thursday - Romans 11 is a chapter which illustrates God's sovereign will exerting itself on the nation of Israel, and the resulting good that came from it: The Gentiles have come to faith in God. God ultimately accomplishes His purposes even though it may look like purely human events or decisions along the way. Note what the Scripture teaches us on God's sovereign movement on nations and people:

<u>God's method of dealing sovereignly with the world around us:</u>

A. He sometimes exerts a restraining influence...by which people are prevented from doing what they're naturally inclined to do.

B. He sometimes exerts a softening influence...causing them to move contrary to natural inclinations, and promote His cause.

C. He sometimes exerts a directing influence...so that good is made to result from their intended evil.

Cite examples from your own life and observations on how God has exerted His sovereign will on people..

A. A restraining influence...

_____

_____

B. A softening influence...

_____

_____

C. A directing influence...

_____

_____

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Friday - Romans 11 ends with a beautiful benediction on God's sovereignty:

For God has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to Him again? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Then, chapter 12 begins with our appropriate response: I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Today, jot down how your mind is being renewed to think like God thinks, and to trust Him in the areas where you don't. Journal your understanding of God's sovereign reign over your world.

_____

_____

_____

_____

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LORDSHIP

"You will never know that Jesus is all you need until Jesus is all you've got." ***Mother Theresa***

What is Lordship?

1. Submission to God's will - Matt. 8:2
2. Placing God first in your life - Matt. 22:36-40
3. Accepting responsibility and accountability - Matt. 25:14-30
4. Doing God's will - Matt. 7:21-27
5. Personal obedience regardless of the cost - John 21:15-23

In a little church in Eastern Europe, about a hundred people had gathered to worship God on a beautiful Sunday morning. They had just finished a prayer, when suddenly, with a loud bang, Communist soldiers burst through the front door, submachine guns in hand. They made their way to the front of the church, calling the people gathered there "the filth of the earth" and "parasites ruining the glorious revolution", and shouted that the time had come to rid the nation of them.

Acknowledging that there might be some who did not really believe all that religious nonsense, the soldiers gave them sixty seconds to leave the room. There was silence. Then, suddenly, about half of the congregation rushed pell-mell to the doors, some even through the windows, to get out in time. The minute was over, and deeper silence fell upon the remaining half of the congregation as they stared down the muzzles of the submachine guns. After this, the men dropped their guns and said, "Brethren, we have come to worship with you! But first, we had to get rid of the hypocrites!"

One word separated those who stayed from those who left...Lordship!

"Not everyone who calls me their Lord will get into the kingdom of heaven. Only the ones who obey my Father in heaven will get in. On the day of judgment many will call me their Lord. They will say, 'We preached in your name, and in your name we forced out demons and worked many miracles.' But I will tell them, 'I will have nothing to do with you! Get out of my sight, you evil people!'" Matthew 7:21-23

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There are three classes of people...
1. Those who neither call Him Lord nor do the things He says.
2. Those who call Him Lord but do not do the things He says.
3. Those who call Him Lord and do the things He says.

S. M. Lockridge

S. M. Lockridge went on to say:

"Christ's Lordship is based on his ownership.
God didn't have to put His signature on the corner of a sunrise;
Nobody else is going to cause the sun to rise...He's the owner.
God didn't have to put a laundry mark on the lapel of a meadow...
He's the owner.

God didn't have to carve His initials on the side of the mountain...
He's the owner.
God didn't have to put a brand on the cattle of a thousand hills...
He's the owner.
God didn't even have to take out a copyright on the songs that the birds sing...He's the owner!"

My One Hour With God

1. Preparation Time

Commit yourself to the Owner right now. Hannah Whitehall Smith said, "It is generally much less difficult for us to commit the keeping of our future to the Lord than it is to commit our present. We know we are helpless as regards the future, but we feel as if the present was in our own hands, and must be carried on our own shoulders; and most of us have an unconfessed idea that it is a great deal to ask the Lord to carry ourselves, and that we cannot think of asking him to carry our burdens too."

2. Waiting Time

During your waiting time, let God...

1. Love you

"God, I feel your love today, especially in the area of..."

_____

_____

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2. Search you

"God, you have permission to reveal any uncommitted area in my life."

_____

_____

3. Show you

"God, is there anything that I need to know as I enter this day?"

_____

_____

3. Confession Time

Lordship in your life means that your words and your walk are the same. If any of the following thoughts speak to your heart and show inconsistencies in your life, spend time confessing these areas to God.

You call Me Master and obey me not,
You call Me Light and see me not,
You call Me Way and follow me not,
You call Me Life and desire me not,
You call Me wise and acknowledge me not,
You call Me fair and love me not,
You call Me rich and ask me not,
You call Me eternal and seek me not,
You call Me gracious and trust me not,
You call Me Noble and serve me not,
You call Me mighty and honor me not,
You call Me just and fear me not,
If I condemn you, blame me not.

4. Bible Time

We can never pray out of God's will when we pray God's Word

...Read this passage slowly a couple of times

...Close your eyes and allow a main truth to surface in your heart

...Pray the Scripture and allow God to minister to you

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"Why do you keep on saying that I am your Lord, when you refuse to do what I say? Anyone who comes and listens to me and obeys me is like someone who dug down deep and built a house on solid rock. When the flood came and the river rushed against the house, it was built so well that it didn't even shake. But anyone who hears what I say and doesn't obey me is like someone whose house was not built on solid rock. As soon as the river rushed against that house, it was smashed to pieces!" Luke 6:46-49

5. Meditation Time

After praying the Scriptures, write down the thoughts that God has impressed upon your mind.

(1)

(2)

(3)

6. Intercession Time - Praying for Others

Begin this time with a prayer of blessing and thanksgiving for the people for whom you will now intercede.

Name	Request

7. Petition Time - Praying for Yourself

How to petition God properly

A. Talk to him about the "little things"

B. Be honest with God

C. Pray "Thy will be done"

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Prayer Requests

(1) (5)

(2) (6)

(3) (7)

(4) (8)

8. Application Time

The smallest obedient act is better than the greatest intention

Q. What is the main thing that God has impressed upon me today?

_____

_____

Q. What am I going to do about it?

_____

Steps to take in my obedience to God

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

9. Faith Time

Faith is our positive response to what God has said. Spend a few moments praying, through your eyes of faith. Tell God the positive things you see happening because of His goodness!

10. Praise and Thanksgiving Time

Praise God by recognizing **WHO HE IS**

Thank God by recognizing **WHAT HE HAS DONE**

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THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

"But more than anything else, put God's work first and do what He wants. Then all the other things will be yours as well."

Matthew 6:33

This week's Time Alone With God

Monday - This lesson

Tuesday - Friday - Lordship is a heavy issue. Spend this week settling the "Who's #1 issue." Study the ladder, read the Scriptures, and determine to climb up.

The Lordship Ladder

Peace _____	Romans 8:1
Total Surrender _____	Romans 12:1,2
Hunger for Righteousness _____	Matthew 5:6
Partial Surrender _____	Luke 9:57-62
Wrestling _____	Romans 7
Seeking _____	Matthew 6:33
Unstableness _____	James 1:8

Check each rung of the ladder that you have climbed.

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PASSION

"Man is so made that whenever anything fires his soul, impossibilities vanish!" ***Jean de la Fontaine***

The starting point of all achievement is desire. Keep this constantly in mind. Weak desires bring weak results, just as a small amount of fire makes a small amount of heat. If you find yourself lacking in persistence, this weakness may be remedied by building a stronger fire under your desires.

The Apostle Paul met his defeat not at Thessalonica (where he was mobbed), nor at Philippi (where he was beaten), nor at Corinth (where he was persecuted), nor at Jerusalem (where he was torn by the mob), for he built churches in all these cities; he met his defeat at Athens, where he met only indifference. He found no faith there and consequently built no churches there.

Among the great number of books authored by C. S. Lewis is the highly provocative, "The Screwtape Letters." In it, the profound Englishman had the devil brief his nephew, Wormwood, on the subtleties and techniques of tempting the people. The goal, he counsels, is not wickedness but indifference. Satan cautions his nephew to keep the prospect, the patient, comfortable at all costs. If he should become concerned about anything of importance, encourage him to think about his luncheon plans; not to worry, it could induce indigestion. And then this definitive job description: "I, the devil, will always see to it that there are bad people. Your job, my dear Wormwood, is to provide me with the people who do not care."

"We are caught up at a particular stage in our national ethos in which we're not only materialistic, but worse than that-we're becoming emotionally dead as a people. We don't sing, we don't dance, we don't even commit sin with much enthusiasm. Kierkegaard once said this age will die, not from sin, but from a lack of passion. There is a deadness everywhere. High schools are apathetic. Colleges are apathetic. I mean, everybody's gone to sleep." Tony Compolo, Publishers Weekly, Sept. 6, 1991

Jesus had a warning along that line for the church at Ephesus. While acknowledging their accomplishments, hard work, and doctrinal purity, He looked them right in the eyes and said (in effect), "You're doing all this stuff in My name, but I don't think you even love Me anymore" (see Rev. 2:1-6).

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His prescription? Stop dead in your tracks. Set aside your preoccupations. Turn around. Remember your first commitment to your Lord. Do the things you used to do in that first flush of wholehearted surrender and joy. And watch yourself!

My One Hour With God

1. Preparation Time

Zeal is a burning desire to please God; to do his will; to advance His glory in the world in every way possible. It is a quality that we are all to possess. In fact, it is part of the purpose of redemption that we should demonstrate zeal. Titus 2:14 says that Christ "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for his own possession, zealous for good deeds."

Commit yourself right now, to start a "fire" within you.

2. Waiting Time

During your waiting time, let God...

1. Love you

"God, I feel your love today, especially in the area of..."

_____

_____

2. Search you

"God, you have permission to reveal any apathetic spirit in my life."

_____

_____

3. Show you

"God, is there anything that I need to feel as I enter this day?"

_____

_____

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3. Confession Time

There is an old story about the man who tried to save Sodom from destruction. The city's inhabitants ignored him, and a friend asked mockingly, "Why bother everyone? You can't change them."

"Maybe I can't change them," the man replied, "but if I still shout and scream, it my prevent them from changing me!"

Questions:	No	Somewhat	Yes
Has your love grown cold for God?	{ }	{ }	{ }
Do you carry a burden for the unsaved?	{ }	{ }	{ }
Is there great joy in serving God?	{ }	{ }	{ }

4. Bible Time

We can never pray out of God's will when we pray God's Word

...Read this passage slowly a couple of times

...Close your eyes and allow a main truth to surface in your heart

...Pray the Scripture and allow God to minister to you

"The very credentials these people are waving around as something special, I'm tearing up and throwing out with the trash - along with everything else I used to take credit for. And why? Because of Christ. Yes, all the things I once thought were so important are gone from my life. Compared to the high privilege of knowing Jesus Christ as my Master, firsthand, everything I once thought I had going for me is insignificant - dog dung. I've dumped it all in the trash so that I could embrace Christ and be embraced by him. I didn't want some petty, inferior brand of righteousness that comes from keeping a list of rules when I could get the robust kind that comes from trusting Christ - God's righteousness.

I gave up all that inferior stuff so I could know Christ personally, experience his resurrection power, be a partner in his suffering, and go all the way with him to death itself. If there was any way to get in on the resurrection from the dead, I wanted to do it.

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I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong; by no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward - to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.

So let's keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us. If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision - you'll see it! Now that we're on the right track, let's stay on it." Phil. 3:7-16 (The Message)

5. Meditation Time

After praying the Scriptures, write down the thoughts that God has impressed upon your mind.

(1)

(2)

(3)

Dr. Cortland Myers, in his book, "How Do We Know?" tells of Robert Murray McCheyne, one of Scotland's greatest preachers. He died at 29 years, and everywhere he stepped, Scotland shook. Whenever he opened his mouth, there was a spiritual force sweeping in every direction. Thousands followed him into God's kingdom.

A traveler, anxious to see where McCheyne had preached, went to the Scotch town and found the church. An old gray-haired sexton agreed to take him through the church. He led the way into McCheyne's study. He said, "Sit in that chair." The traveler hesitated a moment, then sat down. On the table before him was an open Bible. "Drop your head on that book and weep. That is the way our minister always did before he began to preach!"

With such a passion for lost and needy souls, is it any wonder that the Holy Spirit gave McCheyne a magnetic personality that drew everybody after him into the family of God? (From "Quiet Hour Stories" by Keith L. Brooks)

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6. Intercession Time - Praying for Others

Begin this time with a prayer of blessing and thanksgiving for the people for whom you will now intercede.

Name	Request

7. Petition time - Praying for Yourself

How to petition God properly

A. Talk to him about the "little things"

B. Be honest with God

C. Pray "Thy will be done"

Prayer Requests

(1)	(5)
(2)	(6)
(3)	(7)
(4)	(8)

8. Application Time

The smallest obedient act is better than the greatest intention

Q. What is the main thing that God has impressed upon me today?

_____

_____

Q. What am I going to do about it?

_____

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Steps to take in my obedience to God

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

Passion is shown by your action. For example, it will be shown by a great desire for personal holiness. It will reflect the attitude of Matthew 5:29,30:

"If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you... if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you..."

In other words, anything will be sacrificed that prevents Christians' growth.

9. Faith Time

Faith is our positive response to what God has said. Spend a few moments praying, through your eyes of faith. Tell God the positive things you see happening because of His goodness!

10. Praise and Thanksgiving Time

Praise God by recognizing **WHO HE IS**

Thank God by recognizing **WHAT HE HAS DONE**

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

"He gave himself to rescue us from everything that is evil and to make our hearts pure. He wanted us to be his own people and to be eager to do right."

Titus 2:14

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This week's Time Alone With God

Monday - This lesson

Tuesday - Friday - Below are some great verses on passion. They tell of a work that He puts within us that will make us different. Read these each day and ask God to do a work within you that you cannot do for yourself.

"Who has put wisdom in the inward parts? Or who has given understanding to the heart? (Job 38:36)

"You have put gladness in my heart." (Psalm 4:7)

"I have put My Spirit upon Him." (Isaiah 42:1)

"Where is He that put His Holy Spirit in the midst of them?" (Isaiah 63:11)

"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." (Jer. 31:33)

"I will put My fear in their hearts." (Jer. 32:40)

"I will put a new spirit within you." (Ezek. 11:19)

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." (Ezek. 36:26)

"And I will put My Spirit within you." (Ezek. 36:27)

God works from the inside out, not the outside in. God does a work in our hearts. He changes our thoughts and attitudes, which changes our choices, which changes our actions, which changes our very lives.

We, like Nehemiah, are to work out what God has worked in. God never asks you to do a work outwardly unless He has first done a work inwardly. But it is our responsibility to respond. When God has worked in our lives, then we are to adjust our lives to His agenda, not ours.

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FORGIVING MYSELF

The ability or capacity to forgive ourselves is absolutely essential if we are to find inner peace and reach our God-given potential.

Sally was a college freshman when she met Bill, a charming, impetuous medical student. Sally, a Christian, wanted to wait until marriage to enjoy physical intimacy, but Bill was ardent, attentive--and convincing.

He was not so ardent when Sally told him she was pregnant. "Of course you'll get an abortion," he said matter-of-factly. "It'll be much better to have kids once we're married and settled." It sounded so reasonable.

But the day after Sally had the abortion, Bill told her he really wasn't sure she was the one he wanted to marry.

"My heart froze over when he said that," Sally recalled. "Even though I've asked God to forgive me for having an abortion, I can't seem to forgive myself--not only for what I did, but for being so naive and weak."

We need to see ourself through God's eyes. He says in Psalm 103:10-14....

> "He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
> Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
> For high as the heavens are above the earth,
> So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him.
> As far as the east is from the west,
> So far has He removed our transgressions from us.
> Just as a father has compassion on his children,
> So the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him.
> For He Himself knows our frame;
> He is mindful that we are but dust." (NAS)

We may know the truth that God forgives us, but still struggle with feelings of guilt and self-hatred. It's as though there's something blocking what we know in our head--that God forgives us and we can therefore forgive ourselves--from what we feel in our heart. Here are some suggestions to move the truth of Psalm 103 from our head to our heart.

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1. **Adjust our view of God.**

He's not a:	He is:
Taskmaster	Tender with us.
Legal Accountant	Lovingly devoted to us.
Performance-based God	Pleased & delighted in us.

(Zephaniah 3:17)

Ask God to reveal the negative images we might have of Him acquired from childhood, church communities, and other authority figures. Then, meditate on the truth of who God is from Scripture.

2. **Find a safe, understanding, compassionate Christian.**

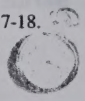
Sally was finally able to forgive herself by sharing her secret--her abortion--with a wise, older Christian woman from her church. "This woman had me picture my heart enclosed in a glass jar," Sally recalls. "I broke that jar and all my feelings of guilt, shame, fear, and rejection tumbled into my hands. Then I walked to the foot of the Cross and laid each thing down, one by one, while my friend read verses from the Bible about forgiveness and healing."

James 5:16 says, "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." Confession is still a powerful way to make tangible God's forgiveness. If you've felt frozen in your attempts to forgive yourself, consider telling your story to a mature, trusted Christian friend, pastor, or counselor.

3. **Be willing to change - to learn to live in freedom!**

Emotionally, we may live so long under guilt and self-condemnation that the very idea of being free is threatening. We feel comfortable with what we know, and what we know is guilt. We adjust to our feelings of guilt and surrender the peace we could enjoy if we forgave ourselves. If we want to be released from guilt, we must change our thinking. We need a thorough cleansing of our thought processes. No more thinking, "I know what the Bible says about forgiveness, but...." Every time we include a "but," we put one more bar in our prison of guilt. We need to get rid of the bars; we need to break out of the prison. We don't have to be there. But we have to want to get out.

Meditate on Romans 8:1; Galatians 5:1; John 8:32; Hebrews 10:17-18.



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MY ONE HOUR WITH GOD

1. Preparation Time

Romans 8:1 "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

List the areas or incidents from your past or present where there are sometimes feelings of guilt, shame, or condemnation.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

2. Waiting Time

During your waiting time, let God...

1. Love you - Read, meditate, and picture God delighting in you from Zephaniah 3:17.

   _____

2. Search you

   "God, you have permission to reveal any hidden areas of hurt, unforgiveness, or shame in my life."

   _____

3. Show you

   "God, is there anything that I need to know about forgiving myself as I enter this day?"

   _____

3. Confession Time

I John 1:9 - "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

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a. Confess your sin of unbelief of God's forgiveness for you.

"Father, forgive me for holding myself in bondage, for keeping myself from You, and for limiting Your use of me."

b. Read Hebrews 10:17-21. Picture each area/incident where you need to forgive yourself and leave it at the cross with Jesus. Picture Jesus taking the burden upon Himself, forgiving you, receiving His forgiveness, and walking away in freedom.

4. Bible Time

We can never pray out of God's will when we pray God's Word.

...Read this passage slowly a couple of times.

...Close your eyes and allow a main truth to surface in your heart.

...Pray the Scripture out loud and allow God to minister to you.

Psalm 103:10-14

"He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
For high as the heavens are above the earth,
So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him.
As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He removed our transgressions from us.
Just as a father has compassion on his children,
So the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him.
For He himself knows our frame;
He is mindful that we are but dust." (NAS)

5. Meditation Time

After praying the Scriptures, write down the thoughts that God has impressed upon your mind.

(1)

(2)

(3)

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6. Intercession Time - Praying for Others

Pray for people that you know who also have a difficult time forgiving themselves. Pray for anyone else that God lays on your heart.

Name	Request

7. Petition Time - Praying for Yourself

How to petition God properly

A. Talk to him about the "little things."

B. Be honest with God.

C. Pray "Thy will be done."

Prayer Requests

(1)	(5)
(2)	(6)
(3)	(7)
(4)	(8)

8. Application Time

The smallest obedient act is better than the greatest intention.

Q. What is the main thing that God has impressed upon me today? _____

_____

Q. What am I going to do about it?

_____

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Steps to Take in my Obedience to God this Week

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

My Goal: To implement the above steps in the next seven days.

9. Faith Time

Faith is our positive response to what God has said. Spend a few moments praying, through your eyes of faith. Tell God the positive things you see happening because of His goodness!

10. Praise and Thanksgiving Time

Praise God by recognizing **WHO HE IS**

Thank God by recognizing **WHAT HE HAS DONE**

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

"As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us."

Psalm 103:12 (NAS)

This week's Time Alone With God

Monday - This lesson

Tuesday - Memorize Psalm 103:12

Wednesday - Read and meditate on Zephaniah 3:17

Thursday - Read Romans 8

Friday - Review your memory verses

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GRACE

God's grace is mine for free, because it is based upon Jesus' performance . . . and not mine.

Author Keith Miller became extremely transparent when he told the story of how he'd once planned to commit adultery. He had planned to meet a woman in a certain hotel, out of state. But when he got to his hotel room and picked up the phone to call her--his mind was flooded with Scripture. Interestingly, he said, it was not passages dealing with the sin of adultery, but with the love of God. God was clearly communicating that no matter what happened that night, He still loved Keith, as a son. Keith slammed the phone down. It became difficult to proceed with his sin when he was being consumed with God's unconditional love. He picked up the phone again, but again--more grace and love. When he tried to call the woman for the third time, he was so overwhelmed with God's love for him that he slammed down the phone and cried out: "It's no use! God--I am hopelessly in love with you!"

Isn't it interesting that it was <u>not</u> the law (Thou shalt not commit adultery) that empowered Keith to avoid the sin? It was grace. For God to demonstrate love in that moment didn't make sense . . . but it got the job done. In Luke 10:38-42, Jesus teaches the priority of grace. Martha is troubled over her inability to pull off a perfect dinner. Jesus, refusing to be impressed by her human effort, taught a valuable lesson: Do not attempt to serve God until you are first served by Him. Mary was experiencing the grace and relationship and presence of Jesus before she attempted to "perform." Many of us have jumped directly into a "performance trap", without a prior empowering of the grace of God.

GRACE FOUNDATIONS . . .

1. God's grace is available because it is based upon Jesus' performance - not mine.
2. God does not love me and save me for what I can do for Him.
3. I must die to my "old husband" (the law) and stop relating to God on that basis.
4. God's grace accepts me as I am, then enables me to live above my own ability.
5. My service is actually greater under grace, because gratitude, not guilt, is the motivation.
6. All I must have to receive and grow in grace is humility; I need and must ask for grace.

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MY ONE HOUR WITH GOD

1. Preparation Time

II Corinthians 9:8 "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed . . . ." List the issues you are "wrestling with" regarding experiencing God's grace and escaping a performance trap in your . . .

1. Personal Life _____
2. Family Life _____
3. Church Life _____
4. Business Life _____
5. Other _____

2. Waiting Time

During your waiting time, let God . . .

1. Love you

"God, I feel your love today, especially in the area of . . ."

_____

_____

2. Search you

"God, you have permission to reveal any wrong motive in my life. (Guilt, ego, approval of men, etc.)

_____

_____

3. Show you

"God, is there any area in which I need to receive your grace today?"

_____

_____

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3. Confession Time

"But God gives a greater grace. Therefore, it says, 'God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble.' Submit, therefore to God." James 4:6-7

Confess areas in which you boast or have fallen into a performance trap:

(1)

(2)

(3)

4. Bible Time

We can never pray out of God's will when we pray God's Word.

. . . Read this passage slowly a couple of times.

. . . Close your eyes and allow a main truth to surface in your heart.

. . . Pray the Scripture and allow God to minister to you.

II Corinthians 12:9-10
And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

5. Meditation Time

After praying the Scriptures, write down the thoughts that God has impressed upon your mind.

(1)

(2)

(3)

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6. Intercession Time - Praying for Others

Begin this time with a prayer of blessing and for God to pour out a "greater grace" on the people of whom you will now intercede:

NAME	REQUEST

7. Petition Time - Praying for Yourself

Pray for God to reveal areas of your life where you are "performing" in the flesh, then ask for His grace to transform you and empower you:

PRAYER REQUESTS

(1)	(5)
(2)	(6)
(3)	(7)
(4)	(8)

8. Application Time

The smallest obedient act is better than the greatest intention

Q. What is the main thing that God has impressed upon me today? _____

_____

Q. What am I going to do about it?

_____

_____

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Steps to take in my obedience to God this week.

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

My goal: To implement the above steps in the next seven days.

9. Faith Time

Faith is our positive response to what God has said. Spend a few moments praying, through your eyes of faith. Tell God the positive things you see happening because of His goodness!

10. Praise and Thanksgiving Time

Praise God by recognizing **WHO HE IS**
Thank God by recognizing **WHAT HE HAS DONE.**

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed."

II Corinthians 9:8 NAS

This week's Time Alone With God

Monday - This lesson.

Tuesday - God's grace really is sufficient! Not only does it enable us to endure tough times, but it empowers us to more forward in ministry and service.

Below are some fundamental truths about God's grace. Interact with them, and jot down your thoughts: How deeply do you embrace the

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statements? Can you give examples from your life on how you've personally experienced them?

Truth #1: Grace is absolutely free. It never manipulates because you "owe" something. You can't pay for it.

_____

_____

Truth #2: Grace enables you to live beyond your own ability. It is God's sufficient power at your disposal to meet any need.

_____

_____

Truth #3: Grace means God gets all the glory. This is true because God becomes the one who does all the saving and empowering.

_____

_____

Wednesday - "But God gives a greater grace. Therefore, it says, 'God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble.' Submit, therefore to God." James 4:6-7

1. Write down the areas in which you take pride or have fallen into a performance trap:

_____

_____

2. The text above speaks of God giving a "greater grace." This simply means that the same grace that saved you, is what will sufficiently enable you to face all other needs in life! God longs to pour out doses of "greater grace" each day of our life to empower us, but many of us struggle receiving anything beyond the grace that will save us. In what areas of your life do you need this "greater grace?"

_____

_____

3. Begin asking God to pour out His grace in these areas. Humble yourself, acknowledge your need, and trust Him for it.

_____

_____

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Thursday - Look again at II Corinthians 12:9-10: "And He has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.' Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore, I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong."

If you have experienced times of powerlessness, or times when you've felt like you're facing your struggles alone, or times when you're caught in a "performance trap", try walking through these...

STEPS INTO GRACE

1. Reveal - Honest personal examination and diagnosis of myself
2. Relinquish - Surrender performance issues to God (Ego/insecurity)
3. Recall - Note the people/reasons for which I'm performing
4. Release - Forgive and let go of wrong views and perceptions
5. Request - Ask for the Holy Spirit to reveal God's grace
6. Renounce - Refuse to allow wrong motives to rule me
7. Respond - Return to serving God with a loving, responsive heart

Friday - In order to experience a lifestyle of grace, you must adjust your heart and mind to think like God does. To walk in this grace on a daily basis, there are three essentials that will enable you to do so:

1. THE ESSENTIAL OF REPENTANCE
You must turn loose of pride and self-sufficiency.

2. THE ESSENTIAL OF FAMILY
God created families to be laboratories of grace and love.
They are to be safe places of relationship; grace-distribution centers.

3. THE ESSENTIAL OF TRUST
You must believe that God will do what He says in His Word.

Q: Do you consistently walk with a repentant heart, leaning on God?_____
_____

Q: Do you have a family "laboratory", whether it is your biological family, or church family, or home group?
_____
_____

Q: Do you really trust God and His unconditional grace for you?_____
_____

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Agenda

Wednesday March 18, 1998

I. Opening Prayer:
II. Vision/Mission Statement and Beliefs
III. Setting Next Meetings
IV. Personal Sharing
V. Closing Prayer: